(b) During the period 2006-07 to 2008-09, a total of 20 oil and 33 gas discoveries have been made under the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) regime.

Shifting of oil depots to uninhabited area

2119. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to shift oil depots to places which are not thickly populated in order to prevent heavy damage due to accidents; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) The setting up of oil depots depends on the supply-demand situation of the area to be served and the location is determined by various factors like mandatory clearances from Central/State and local authorities. Generally, the depots are set up in scarcely populated areas. However, it is observed that the density of population increases after the depot is commissioned. Shifting of oil and gas depots from any location depend on the recommendations of respective Chief Inspectorate of Factories of State Governments and State Pollution Control Board. It also, depends on the availability of suitable land from the State Government and financial viability of the new location.

Import of natural gas from Iran

2120. SHRI T.K. RANGARAJAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had any plan to import natural gas from Iran;

(b) if so, whether any agreement in this regard has been signed with Iranian authorities;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the project is still on the anvil;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) to (f) Government is pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran through Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) Gas Pipeline Project. Various important issues, *viz*., pricing of gas, delivery point of gas, project structure, security of supplies, payment of transportation tariff and transit fees for passage of natural gas through Pakistan, etc., are under discussion amongst the participating countries. Such multilateral projects involve protracted discussions, as all the aspects have to be carefully examined and deliberated upon to the satisfaction of the participating countries to protect each country's interests and to avoid any problems in the future in the successful operation of the Project. Finalization of the agreement can be achieved when satisfactory resolution of the issues

under discussion is reached by the countries participating in the project, *viz*., Iran, Pakistan and India.

Further, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), GAIL (India) Ltd. and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) have signed Sale Purchase Agreements for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) with National Iranian Gas Export Company (NIGEC) on June 13, 2005 for import of total quantity of 5 million tonnes per annum (mmtpa) for a period of 25 years. However, Iran has taken the stand that the Agreements are not effective because of lack of approval by National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC).

Ban on bio-diesel sale

2121. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a circular has been issued to ban the sale of bio-diesel in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Railways and the Brihan-Mumbai Electric Supply and Transport Undertaking have floated tenders for purchase of bio-diesel; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, all the State Governments/Union Territories have been advised to take suitable action in order to curb unauthorized marketing of bio-diesel for use as transportation fuel in terms of the Motor Spirit and High Speed Diesel (Regulation of Supply, Distribution and Prevention of Malpractices) Order, 2005.

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Railways and the Brihan Mumbai Electric Supply and Transport Undertaking have reported that they have floated tenders for the procurement of 50,000 KL and 3,300 KL of bio-diesel respectively.

This Ministry has clarified to all the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations that Bio-diesel (B100) as per BIS specification IS 15607: 2005 is a blend stock for High Speed Diesel (HSD). As such, it is clear that B100, complying with IS 15607: 2005 is exclusively meant for being blended with diesel fuel (IS1460), within the prescribed limits. B100 is not a fuel authorized for use as fuel in any type of automobile vehicle fitted with spark ignition engine or compression ignition engine.

Rebate to BPL families on gas connection

†2122. SHRI KRISHAN LAL BALMIKI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to give rebate of one thousand rupees to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families on gas connection;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.